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Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Seventy-first year

Identical letters dated 8 September 2016 from the Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council

I write to alert you to the grave situation and continuously rising tensions in the Occupied State of Palestine, including East Jerusalem, as a result of Israel's relentless provocations and illegal actions against the Palestinian people. On a daily basis, the occupying Power persists with its grave violations of international humanitarian and human rights law, which are exacerbating the humanitarian situation on the ground, intensifying the hardships faced by the Palestinian people and diminishing any hope of achieving peace based on the two-State solution.

Today, we bring your immediate attention to the critical situation of Palestinian political prisoners illegally imprisoned and detained by Israel. Thousands of Palestinians, among them women and children, continue to be held in deplorable conditions and subjected to grave human rights violations. In particular, I must underscore the plight of three hunger-striking prisoners risking their lives in a peaceful, non-violent protest of their detention without charge. In this regard, Malik Al-Qadi, age 20, and brothers, Mohammed Al-Balboul, age 25, and Mahmoud Al-Balboul, age 21, have been on a continuous hunger strike for more than 67 days and are almost facing inevitable death after being neglected and treated inhumanely by Israeli occupation authorities.

The three hunger strikers are now hospitalized in Israeli hospitals due to the severe deterioration in their health. Mohammed is currently suffering from temporary blindness. His health condition worsened after hospital staff and Israeli occupying authorities attempted to force-feed him, which is considered a form of torture. Meanwhile, Mahmoud's health has also deteriorated and he risks becoming paralyzed. The brothers were arrested alongside each other during a violent predawn raid by Israeli occupying forces who invaded their family home in Bethlehem in the Occupied West Bank on 4 July 2016. At the same time, Malik has been on a hunger strike since 11 July, after being arrested on 23 May 2016, also in Bethlehem. He is

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suffering from severe pain in the chest and abdomen and has been told by doctors that he is risking organ damage.

We urge the international community to take action to compel Israel, the occupying Power, to cease these condemnable practices and to heed the calls for the release of Palestinian prisoners and detainees in Israeli prisons and detention centres and for respect for their human rights. Serious efforts must be made by the international community to compel Israel to comply with international law, including humanitarian law, specifically article 76 of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, which clearly defines the rights of protected persons faced with detention by an occupying Power. The international community must ensure that the occupying Power acts humanely towards the peaceful, non-violent hunger-striking prisoners and release them and all other Palestinians being unlawfully and arbitrarily imprisoned and detained.

Moreover, the occupying Power carried out yet another extrajudicial execution, killing Mustafa Nimr, age 27, and seriously wounding his cousin, Ali Nimr, in Shuafat refugee camp in occupied East Jerusalem. The occupying forces had been in the camp carrying out a violent raid when Mustafa and Ali returned back to the camp after going food shopping. When they arrived at the camp, Israeli occupying forces riddled their car with over 60 bullets and they also opened fire on ambulances trying to reach the young men for over an hour. Mustafa was declared dead at the scene but his body was taken by Israeli occupying forces and is being withheld from his family. Ali is currently in Hadassah hospital in occupied East Jerusalem and is being treated for critical blood loss. In another exposé of the complete disregard for Palestinian human life and the immoral behaviour of Israeli occupying forces, a video that was taken of the tragic incident has surfaced showing Israel's occupying forces shooting at the car after it had been stopped. These latest extrajudicial executions highlight the continuing need for international protection for the Palestinian people. Moreover, we demand justice for our people and call for the international community to hold the perpetrators of this latest crime responsible for their war crimes. The culture of impunity that Israel has enjoyed for a half a century at the expense of innocent Palestinian life due to the inaction by the international community must come to an immediate end.

The international community cannot continue absolving Israel, the occupying Power, of its responsibility for these violations and of its obligations under international law and the relevant United Nations resolutions. We call on the international community, including the Security Council, to act with urgency and responsibility to ensure the de-escalation of this perilous situation in Occupied Palestine, including in particular in Occupied East Jerusalem, and to bring a halt to the occupying Power's violations of international law, which are unjustifiable in any way, remain the source of grave hardship and suffering for the Palestinian people, and seriously jeopardize the prospects for realizing a peaceful, just settlement on the basis of international law and relevant United Nations resolutions and in accordance with the two-State solution based on the pre-1967 borders.

This letter is in follow-up to our 594 previous letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, which constitutes the territory of the State of Palestine. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 2 September 2016 (A/ES-10/731-S/2016/758) constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed by Israel, the

occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, acts of State terrorism and systematic human rights violations being committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations